

Bringing post-war history to life in graphic novels. The example of Maczków

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ABSTRACT

Taking the example of the graphic novel “MACZKÓW. A German-Polish post-war story”, which was recently published by our documentaMon centre, the proposed contribution would like to take up the topic of communicating history through a historically annotated comic.

It tells the story of an impossible love affair to unfold one of the most unusual chapters in German post-war history. Far away from Poland, a Polish ‘occupation zone’ was created for three years in 1945 in the small town of Haren on the Ems river in north-west Germany: Haren became Maczków. Thousands of Poles – among them a large number of liberated female soldiers of the Polish Home Army from nearby POW camps – found a temporary home there, assigned to a kind of ‘waiting room’ while the German population was evacuated. In the midst of this confusing situation, the young Polish girl Anna and the German Johann meet. Will the two young people manage to maintain their feelings for each other despite the difficult circumstances?

Particular reference will be made to the projects with various schools (grades 10-12) that have approached the topic through the development of scenic/theatrical readings, both in the town of Haren itself, where the historical events took place and where intergenerational family stories are still present, as well as in other regions of Germany, where previously there was complete ignorance of this historical phenomenon.

CV

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